



NEWS RELEASE

United States Department of Agriculture
NATIONAL AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS SERVICE
COLORADO FIELD OFFICE



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USDA-NASS SEEKS PUBLIC INPUT ON FUTURE ENERGY PROGRAM

DENVER, CO – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) is seeking stakeholder input as it develops an annual program to collect and publish data about agriculture's production and use of renewable energy.

"With growing national interest in energy efficiency and alternative energy sources, there is a need for solid data about how the agriculture sector is generating and using renewable energy," said Bill Meyer, director of the NASS Colorado Field Office. "In response to this need, we're expanding our data collection efforts and are hoping that farmers, farm and energy organizations, and other stakeholders will weigh in and tell us exactly what information they want and need."

In the 2007 Census of Agriculture, NASS for the first time included a question about on-farm energy production. Based on the information gathered from the census, NASS is currently conducting USDA's first On-Farm Renewable Energy Production Survey, focusing on farms and ranches that produced renewable energy via solar panels, wind turbines and methane digesters in 2009.

"This initial survey will provide important baseline data, and our plan is to expand our efforts into a broader, annual survey program beginning in 2012," Meyer said. "We're open to looking at all aspects of renewable energy production and use, including issues such as the costs and benefits, the motivators and obstacles, and the handling and use of energy co-products."

A notice in today's *Federal Register* (<http://frwebgate2.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/TEXTgate.cgi?WALSdocID=P7Hoyw/0/1/0&WALSaction=retrieve>) includes details about the opportunity for interested individuals and organizations to provide input to NASS. Additional information, including an online comment form, is available at: <http://www.nass.usda.gov/energysurvey/>.

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